

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002216

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DEPT FOR EUR/WE, DRL/IL, PM, EUR/RPM, L/PM
DOL FOR ILAB - BILL BRUMFIELD
DOD ALSO FOR OSD/ISA/EUR, JOINT STAFF J-5, AND GC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/07/2012
TAGS: ELAB PGOV PREL MARR IT FORCES IN ITALY
SUBJECT: MILITARY BASES IN ITALY: CGIL AND UGL
REPRESENTATION OF DIRECT-HIRE WORKERS

REF: ROME 2198

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR MEL SEMBLER. REASON 1.5 (D).

11. (C) IN MEETINGS WITH THE AMBASSADOR APRIL 22 AND 26 (REFTEL), CGIL AND UGL LEADERS BOTH REFERRED TO U.S. FORCE POLICY THAT EXCLUDES THESE TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS FROM REPRESENTING DIRECT-HIRE WORKERS AT BASES IN ITALY. WHILE CHARACTERIZING THE UNION'S RELATIONS WITH THE EMBASSY AS "EXCELLENT," OUTGOING CGIL SECRETARY GENERAL SERGIO COFFERATI REFERRED TO ONE "MINOR" PROBLEM THAT, HE SAID, HE WAS SURE WOULD BE TAKEN UP AND RESOLVED BY HIS SUCCESSOR. ALTHOUGH COFFERATI DIDN'T IDENTIFY THIS "MINOR" PROBLEM (AND PASSED OVER IT IN SECONDS), THE REFERENCE TO BASE EXCLUSION WAS CLEAR.

12. (C) T THE UGL, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL RENATA POLVERIN ALSO REFERRED TO A "SMALL" PROBLEM AT THE BASES BUT WAS DIRECT IN RAISING AND LAYING OUT THE ISSUE. IT WAS ONE, SHE SAID, IN WHICH THE UGL (ANDCGIL) HAD BEEN PREVENTED "FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASON" FROM REPRESENTING DIRECT-HIRE WORKERS. THE MATTER HAD BEEN RAISED AND "ALMOST RESOLVED" UNDER THE

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PREVIOUS AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AND PREVIOUS GOI. PLVERINI SAID UGL MEMBERS AT THE BASES WOULD LIKETHEIR UNION TO BE ABLE TO REPRESENT THEM. SHE NTED THAT THEN-LABOR MINISTER CESARE SALVI (OF THECENTER-LEFT GOI HEADED BY PRIME MINISTER MASSIMO D'ALEMA), IN ORDER NOT TO APPEAR PARTISAN, HAD INTERCEDED WITH THE EMBASSY IN 2000 IN BEHALF OF BOTH THE LEFT-OF-CENTER CGIL AND RIGHT-OF-CENTER UGL. THE CURRENT (CENTER-RIGHT) GOI, SHE SUGGESTED, MIGHT INTERVENE FOR SIMILAR REASONS ON BEHALF OF BOTH CONFEDERATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR UNDERTOOK TO CONSIDER THE MATTER WHICH, HE EMPHASIZED, WAS ONE U.S. MILITARY AUTHORITIES WOULD DECIDE.

13. (C) COMMENT: THE ISSUE OF CGIL/UGL EXCLUSION WAS FIRST RAISED BY THE CGIL IN 1994, BY THE UGL MORE RECENTLY. BOTH UNIONS HAVE PURSUED THEIR QUEST QUIETLY, THROUGH DIRECT REPRESENTATIONS TO U.S. FORCES AND THIS MISSION. WHILE THE UNIONS HAVE DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE GOI MINISTRY OF LABOR, BOTH HAVE REFRAINED FROM RAISING IT PUBLICLY. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE - WHICH DID NOT RAISE CONTROVERSY AT THE TIME - OCCURRED IN JUNE 2000, WHEN COMMUNIST RENEWAL (RC) SENATOR GIOVANNI RUSSO SPENA FILED A "QUESTION" IN PARLIAMENT SHORTLY BEFORE ITS ADJOURNMENT.

14. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: THE CURRENT CONTEXT IS TRANQUIL. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, BASE LABOR RELATIONS ARE GOOD, AND THE MISSION'S RELATIONS WITH ALL FOUR NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS ARE EXCELLENT. MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE CURRENT GOI IS ONGOING; OUR MILITARY PRESENCE IN ITALY IS EXPANDING. NONETHELESS THE CGIL/UGL ISSUE, "DORMANT" OVER THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, HAS AGAIN BEEN RAISED WITH THIS MISSION AND COULD AGAIN BECOME AN ISSUE IN PARLIAMENT AND BE

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